

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. I.

BOSTON, SEPTEMBER, 1892.

No. 4.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

MONTHLY: 50 cents a year. Single copy, 5 cents.

GEORGE H. ELLIS, PRINTER, 141 FRANKLIN ST., BOSTON.

CONTENTS OF NO. 4.

WHERE IS HEAVEN?	33
EDEN AND GETHSEMANE	33
THE STILL HOUR	35
THE BIBLE CLASS	36
THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB	39
THE EDITOR'S LETTER-BOX	40
THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL	43
MISCELLANEOUS	44

WHERE IS HEAVEN?

Let whosoever will, inquire
Of spirit or of seer;
To shape unto the heart's desire
The new life's vision clear.
My God, I rather look to thee
Than to these fancies fond;
And wait till thou reveal to me
The faint and far Beyond.
I seek not of thine Eden-land
The forms and hues to know;
What trees in mystic order stand;
What strange, sweet waters flow.
What duties fill the heavenly day,
Or converse glad and kind;
Or how along the shining way
The bright processions wind.
Oh, joy to hear, with sense new-born,
The angels' greeting strains;
And sweet to see the first fair morn
Gild the celestial plains!
But sweeter far to trust to thee
While all is yet unknown;
And through the death-dark, cheerily
To walk with thee alone.
In thee my powers, my treasures, live;
To thee my life must tend;
Giving thyself, thou all dost give,
O soul-sufficing Friend!

And wherefore should I seek above
A city in the sky?

Since firm in faith, and deep in love,
Its broad foundations lie.

Since in a life of peace and prayer
Not known on earth, nor praised,
By humble toil, by ceaseless care,
The holy towers are raised.

Where pain the soul has purified,
And penitence has striven,
And truth is crowned and glorified,
There—only there—is heaven!

—*Eliza Scudder.*

EDEN AND GETHSEMANE.

There is an Adam and a Christ within us all,—a natural and a spiritual man, whereof the father of our race and the author of our faith are the respective emblems, both in the order of their succession and the nature of their mission. We are endowed with powers of sense, of understanding, of action, by which we communicate with the scene of our present existence, and win triumphs over external and finite nature. And we are conscious, however faintly, of aspirations and affections, of a faith and wonder, of a hope and sadness, which bear us beyond the margin of the earthly and finite, and afford some glimpse of the infinitude in which we live. By the one we go forth and discover our knowledge, by the other return within and learn our ignorance. By the one we conquer nature, by the other we serve God. By the one we shut ourselves up in life, by the other we look with full gaze through death. By the one we acquire happiness and sagacity and skill, by the other wisdom and sanctity and truth. By the one we look on our position and all that surrounds it with the eye of economy, by the other with the eye of love. Our first and superficial aim is to be, like Adam, *lord*

below; our last, to be like Christ, *associate above*. In short, the individual mind is conducted through a history like the sacred record of the general race, and, if it be just to its capacities, passes through a period of new creation; and every noble life, like the Bible (which is "the book of life,") begins with paradise and ends with heaven.

Ere Jesus became the Christ he was led into the desert to be tempted. And before the Messiah within us—the messenger spirit of God in the soul—can make his inspiration felt, and render his voice articulate and clear, we, too, must have been called to severe and lonely struggles with the power of sin. On no lighter terms can the natural man pass into the spiritual, and Deity shape forth a dwelling within the deeps of our humanity. In childhood we live in God's creation, as in the unanxious shelter of some Eden; the innocent in a garden of fruits, where the tillage demands no toil, and with smallest restraint we have little else but to gather and enjoy; and the utmost duty is to abstain rather than to do; to keep the lips from forbidden fruits, not to spend the labor and sorrow of the brow or of the soul to raise and multiply the bread of nature or of life. And many, alas! there are who make their life this sort of holiday thing unto the end, and retain its childishness; only, from the nature of the case, losing all its innocence; strolling through it as a mere fruit-gathering place, a garden of indulgence, a Paradise, sacred no more, because empty now of God, and unvisited by the murmurs of his voice. There comes a time to us all, when the sense of responsibility starts up and rebukes our anxiety for ease; tells us that we are living fast; and, once for all, a life that enlarges to the scale of eternity, and is embosomed everywhere in God; bids us spring from our collapse of selfishness and sleep, take up the full dimensions of our strength, and go forth, to do much if it be possible, and, at least, to do worthily and well. And full often is the conflict terrible between the indolence of custom, the passiveness of self-will, and this inspiring impulse of the divine deliverer within us. Many a secret passage of our existence does it make bleak as the wilderness, and lonely as the Dead Sea shore; in many an hour of meditation, seemingly the stillest, does it inwardly tear us, as in the

mid-strife of heaven and hell, and leave us wasted, as with fasting nigh to death. But oh, if we are only true to the Spirit that declares we "shall not live by bread alone"; if we quietly descend from the pinnacle of our pride (though sin may pretend to make it sacred, and call it a turret of the temple), if we keep close to the meek appointed ways of Him whom our presumption must not try; if we bend no knee to the majesty of splendid wrong, but, in single allegiance to the Holiest, drive away the most glorious spirit of guilt that honors our strength with his assault,—do we not find at length that angels come and minister unto us; that the waste appears to vanish suddenly away, and the desert to blossom as the rose; that we are restored as to a garden, not of the earth, but of the Lord, filled with the whispers of divinest peace? And so our energy is born from the moments of weakness and fear; and, were there no hell to tempt us, there were no heaven to bless. From the crisis of trembling and of doubt, we issue forth to take up our mission gladly, with the unspeakable shelter of God without us, and the hidden life of his love within us.

Children, then, of nature, we are also sons of God; born of the genial earth, we are to climb the glorious heaven; and to the human lot that makes us of one blood with Adam is added the divine liberty of being of one spirit with Christ. That liberty we cannot decline, for we are conscious of it now; and, if we look not on it as on the face of an angel, it will haunt us with its gaze, like the eye of a fiend. The severe prerogatives of an existence half-divine are ours. To wear away life in unproductive harmlessness is innocent no more; with the glory, we take the cross; and, instead of slumbering at noon in Eden, must keep the midnight watch within Gethsemane. We, too, like our great leader, must be made perfect through suffering; but the struggle by night will bring the calmness of the morning, the hour of exceeding sorrow will prepare the day of godlike strength, the prayer for deliverance calls down the power of endurance. And while to the reluctant their cross is too heavy to be borne, it grows light to the heart of willing trust. The faithful heirs of "the man of sorrows," transcending the trials they cannot decline, may quiet the world with the cry, "It is finished," and pass through the silence of death to the peace of God.—*From Sermon by James Martineau.*

THE STILL HOUR.

THE INNER CALM.

Calm me, my God, and keep me calm
While these hot breezes blow;
Be like the night-dew's cooling balm
Upon earth's fevered brow.

Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,
Soft resting on thy breast;
Soothe me with holy hymn and psalm,
And bid my spirit rest.

Calm me, my God, and keep me calm;
Let thine outstretchèd wing
Be like the shade of Elim's palm
Beside her desert spring.

Yes, keep me calm, though loud and rude
The sounds my ear that greet,—
Calm in the closet's solitude,
Calm in the bustling street.

Calm in the hour of buoyant health,
Calm in my hour of pain;
Calm in my poverty or wealth;
Calm in my loss or gain.

Calm as the ray of sun or star
Which storms assail in vain,
Moving unruffled through earth's war
The eternal calm to gain.

—H. Bonar.

Lord, I do discover a fallacy whereby I have long deceived myself, which is this: I have desired to begin my amendment from my birthday, or from the first day of the year, or from some eminent festival, so that my repentance might bear some remarkable date. But, when those days were come, I have adjourned my amendment to some other time. Thus, while I could not agree with myself when to start, I have almost lost the running of the race. I am resolved thus to befool myself no longer. I see no day but to-day. The instant time is always the fittest time. In Nebuchadnezzar's image, the lower the members, the coarser the metal: the farther off the time, the more unfit. To-day is the golden opportunity, to-morrow will be the silver season, next day but the brazen one, and so on, till at last I shall come to the toes of clay, and be turned to dust. Grant therefore that to-day I may hear thy voice; and if this day be obscure in the calendar, and remarkable in itself for nothing else, give me to make it memorable in my soul, thereupon, by thy assistance, beginning the reformation of my life.—*Thomas Fuller.*

Do not lose your inward peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset. Commend all to God, and then lie still and be at rest in his bosom. Whatever happens, abide steadfast in a determination to cling simply to God, trusting to his eternal love for you; and, if you find that you have wandered forth from this shelter, recall your heart quietly and simply. Maintain a holy simplicity of mind, and do not smother yourself with a host of cares, wishes, or longings under any pretext.—*Francis De Sales.*

Whatsoever it is that presses thee, go tell thy Father; put over the matter into his hand, and so thou shalt be freed from that dividing, perplexing care that the world is full of. When thou art either to do or suffer anything, when thou art about any business or purpose, go tell God of it, and acquaint him with it,—yea, burden him with it,—and thou hast done for matter of caring; no more care, but quiet, sweet diligence in thy duty, and dependence on him for the carriage of thy matters. Roll thy cares, and thyself with them, as one burden, all on thy God.—*R. Leighton.*

Saint Bernard has said, "Man, if thou desirest a noble and a holy life and unceasingly prayest to God for it, if thou continue constant in this thy desire, it will be granted unto thee without fail, even if only in the day or hour of thy death; and, if God should not give it thee then, thou wilt find it in him in Eternity: of this be assured."

Therefore do not relinquish your desire, though it be not fulfilled immediately, or though ye may swerve from your aspirations, or even forget them for a time. But, when ye hear the word of God, surrender yourselves to it, as if for eternity, with a full purpose of will to retain it in your mind, and to order your life according to it, and let it sink down, right deep into your heart as into an eternity. If afterward it should come to pass that you let it slip, yet the love and aspiration which once really existed live forever before God, and in him ye shall find the fruit thereof; that is, to all eternity it shall be better for you than if you had never felt them. What we can do is a small thing, but we can will and aspire to great things.—*John Tauler.*

THE BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO JUNE QUESTIONS (*continued*).

The first Bible ever printed was in Latin. Smith's Bible Dictionary says, "It was a good omen that the first book issued from the press should have been the Bible." It was, naturally, founded on the Vulgate, the Latin Bible in common use in manuscript previous to that. (See the account of the Vulgate in August number.)

Early in the sixteenth century Cardinal Ximenes in Spain prepared a very beautiful edition of the Bible in three languages, Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. It was finished and printed in 1517; but about this time the cardinal died, and it was not published until 1522.

Meantime a printer in Basel heard of the cardinal's invention, and wished to anticipate it. He prevailed on the great Dutch scholar Erasmus to prepare an edition for the press. This was done in great haste, and Erasmus's first edition was published in 1516, and was thus the first published, though not the first printed Greek text.

The manuscripts from which Cardinal Ximenes's Bible was printed have not been identified with certainty; but from the character of the text scholars who have studied the matter consider them to be of late origin.

Erasmus used four manuscripts, all of which have been identified. One was of great value, having a text a good deal like the Vatican manuscript; but the other three were all of late origin. Unfortunately, he based his text chiefly on these, as the variations from them caused him to suspect the fourth and earliest manuscript. It is rather interesting to know that he did not insert the text 1 John v. 7 until his third edition. His fourth edition he corrected by the Bible of Cardinal Ximenes; and this edition became the basis of our "Textus Receptus," or Authorized Version.

Another Bible, usually called "Stephens" Bible, appeared in Paris in 1550. The text differs very little from the fourth edition of Erasmus. Its special value consists in the various readings added in the margin collected from fifteen other manuscripts, including a valuable manuscript of the sixth century, called usually "Codex Bezae." This manuscript is now in the Cambridge Library, in England.

Next came the editions of Beza and the Elzevirs. Neither added much to the former readings. They followed the text of the "Stephens" Bible closely. The last were brought out at Leyden between 1624 and 1633.

These were all in Greek. It will be noticed that they were founded on comparatively few manuscripts. Any one who has carefully gone over this sketch of the history of the Authorized Version will be ready to perceive how much we have gained since the time when our Bible was first published: first, in the discovery of new material, especially of the great Sinaitic manuscript; second, in the better scholarship which has learned to distinguish more accurately, the value of the Greek manuscripts, and the great importance of those of an early date. Even great scholars like Cardinal Ximenes and Erasmus did not understand this. They thought the Latin version more valuable and of higher authority than the Greek, and did not realize that several manuscripts of a late date were not so good authority as one or two going back several centuries earlier. This is curiously illustrated by the fact already mentioned, that Erasmus inserted in his third edition the text 1 John v. 7, which does not exist in any Greek manuscript earlier than the *fifteenth* century.

When our Revised Version was published in 1881, many people felt a little pained and shocked at losing any words which were made sacred to them by associations with all that was dearest and most revered in their lives. But we can hardly study and compare the two versions without feeling how much we have gained, and how little we have lost. It would be a good plan for every one who loves the New Testament to have a copy of each version. Then we should realize what a debt of gratitude we owe to those who have given us a truer rendering of the words of Christ, and a more faithful translation of the story of his life. It is true that *students* knew many of these things before; but those who are not students, and they are many more, have them now.

For instance, in the Sermon on the Mount is the phrase, "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause," etc. If we look into the Testaments of students, we shall often find the clause "without a cause"

marked out. The Revised Version has left it out of the text. This is one of those sayings which troubled Tolstoi so much; and at last, after long study and puzzling, he found it was not regarded by scholars as authentic.

Again, at the end of the sixth chapter of Matthew is the admonition, "Take no thought for the morrow." Captious critics, and those not well informed, have made this a handle for accusing Jesus of teaching improvidence. The Revised Version gives us the more correct translation, "Be not, therefore, anxious." Perhaps the reason for this apparent error was that the old English word "thought" seems to imply careful, anxious thought. Words change their meanings in two hundred years.

Another passage of great interest which has been corrected is Matthew xix. 17. Instead of "Why callest thou me good?" as in the Authorized Version, it now stands, "Why askest thou me concerning that which is good?"—a very important difference. It may also be worth while to remember that Matthew is the only one of the *apostles* who tells the story. John does not have it, and neither Luke nor Mark was an apostle.

[Perhaps it may interest some readers to know what are the grounds for this alteration.

The reading of the Authorized Version is supported by one Greek manuscript of the fifth century, by the *later* uncial manuscripts, by the mass of cursives (notice that all cursives are later than the ninth century), by two Latin manuscripts of the fifth century, by the Peshito and Harclean of the Syriac version, and by the Thebaic.

For the reading of the Revised Version the first clause is supported by the Vatican manuscript, the Sinaitic manuscript, by the Codex Bezae in the Cambridge Library, by nine codices of the Vetus Latina, by the Vulgate, by the Curetorian and Jerusalem Syriac, the Memphitic, and the Armenian versions; by Eusebius, Jerome, and others of the Fathers. Origen and Augustine mention it expressly, quoting it and noticing the difference between this passage and the reading of Mark and Luke.

The second clause—"One there is who is good"—is supported by the Vatican and the Sinaitic manuscripts, by the Codex Bezae, the Codex Regius at Paris, seven codices of

the Vetus Latina, and the Vulgate, the Curetorian and Jerusalem Syriac, the Memphitic and Armenian. It is not so *expressly* supported as the first by any patristic writer, but occurs in Irenæus, though in combination with the other version of the first clause. Some authorities give a mixed edition of the passage, one clause in accordance with one form, the other clause in accordance with the other form,—thus the Harclean Syriac, the Ethiopic, two copies of the Vetus Latina, Eusebius, Irenæus, and Justin Martyr; while one cursive manuscript gives both forms in full,—first that of the Authorized Version, then the other.

Such evidence as this points unmistakably to an antecedent variation. The evidence of Origen and Augustine is express as to a difference between Matthew's account and that in Luke and Mark. Among those authorities which present a different form of the passage in Matthew from that in the parallel passages are included nearly all the very earliest. The reading given by the Sinaitic and the Vatican manuscripts seems to have been current before the time of Irenæus and Justin Martyr, and before the formation of the Vetus Latina; that is to say, we are carried back to the beginning of the second century,—an earlier date than can be claimed by any authority for the common reading.

It must also be remembered that it is in accordance with the observed tendency of copyists to alter one passage into conformity with another parallel passage. It is not their habit to introduce discrepancies. Nor is it likely that the passage was tampered with on theological grounds: else why were the other two left as they are?

The conclusion is that in this passage those authorities which differ from the Authorized Version give the earlier and truer text.]

We come now to the last three questions.

5. "What is meant by the *genuineness* and what by the *authenticity* of the New Testament?"

"*Authenticity*" means that the book is what it claims to be. That is, biographies of Jesus, written by those personally acquainted with him, and letters to the early Christians by the first founders of their churches.

"*Genuineness*" has the signification of pure,

true, unadulterated, not altered by interpolation. (We shall take up this point more fully in another lesson.)

6. "What writers of the fourth century (and earlier) quote the New Testament?"

In this century (the fourth) we have ten distinct catalogues of the books of the New Testament.

Six of these agree exactly with our own; namely, the list of Athanasius (A.D. 315), Epiphanius (A.D. 370), Jerome (A.D. 392), Rufinus (A.D. 390), Augustine (A.D. 394), and that of the forty-four bishops assembled in the third council of Carthage (A.D. 397). Of the other four catalogues, that of Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem (A.D. 340), of the bishops of the synod of Laodicea (A.D. 364), and of Gregory Nazianzenus, Bishop of Constantinople (A.D. 375), are the same, except that the Book of Revelation is omitted; and Philaster, Bishop of Brescia (A.D. 380), omits also the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Of the writers of this century, Jerome is the most remarkable. Born about the middle of the fourth century, the most learned of the Latin Fathers, he gives a catalogue of the books of the New Testament in his Epistle to Paulinus. He mentions each of the four Gospels, speaks of the "Acts of the Apostles" as another work by Luke, whose praise is in the Gospel. He mentions Paul's seven Epistles to the churches. Of the Epistle to the Hebrews he says that most persons do not consider it as the work of Paul. He mentions Paul's Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. The seven Catholic Epistles he ascribes to James, Peter, John, and Jude, and ends by saying that the Revelation of John has as many mysteries as words.

The Third Century.—Origen (A.D. 185–253): the first writer who has given a complete catalogue of the books of the New Testament.

Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage (died A.D. 258), quotes copiously from almost all the books of the New Testament.

Hippolytus, Bishop of the Port of Rome (about A.D. 190–230), quotes from all the books of the New Testament except the Epistle to Philemon and the First Epistle of John.

Victorinus, a German bishop, wrote commentaries on some passages of Matthew's Gospel, and quotes nearly every book of the New Testament. This in the last part of the third century.

Second Century.—*Tertullian*, of Carthage (about 160 to 220 A.D., some authorities say 240), speaks of the four Gospels as written by Matthew and John, who were apostles, and Mark and Luke, who were apostolic men; asserts the authority of their writings as inspired books, acknowledged by the Christian Church from their original date; mentions all the books of the New Testament by name, except the Epistle of James, 2 Peter, and 2 and 3 John. Dr. Lardner says that the quotations from the New Testament by Tertullian are both longer and more numerous than the quotations from all the works of Cicero in the writers of all characters for several ages. Tertullian says that the New Testament was opened to all the world, both Christian and heathen.

Clement of Alexandria, contemporary of Tertullian, preceptor of Origen. He gives an account of the order in which the four Gospels were written, and quotes from most of the books of the New Testament by name, so often and so amply that his citations would make a good-sized volume.

Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, A.D. 181, alludes to passages of the New Testament.

Athenagoras, about A.D. 180, in his defence of the Christians, addressed to the Emperor Marcus Antoninus, and in his treatise on the Resurrection, has quoted from five books of the New Testament.

Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, A.D. 130–200, disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John, the apostle, and had conversed with many who had been instructed by the apostles and immediate disciples of Christ. Five books against heresies are all that remain of this writer. Refers frequently to our four Gospels by the names they now bear, to the Book of Acts, Epistle to the Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, 1 and 2 Peter, 1 and 2 John; quotes the Epistle of James once, the book of Revelation often, and ascribes it to John, the apostle; and speaks of the ancient copies of the book as confirmed by John himself.

Justin Martyr, about 100–170 A.D., born at Samaria, frequently quotes from the four Gospels; also quotes from or refers to the Book of Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Peter, and Revelation.

Other writers of this period are Melito, Bishop of Sardis, Hegesippus, Tatian (who made a Diatessaron—what we call a *harmony*—of the four Gospels about A.D. 170). These all quote from the New Testament.

Apostolic Fathers.—The acknowledged Apostolic Fathers are four,—Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Ignatius, and Polycarp. The Shepherd of Hermas is thought by many to be of a later origin.

1. *Barnabas*, the fellow-laborer of Paul, styled an apostle (Acts xiv. 14), is the reputed author of an Epistle which was held in the greatest esteem by the ancients, and is still extant. No book of the New Testament is named in it; but passages are alluded to and phrases quoted.

2. *Clement of Rome*, companion of Paul (Phil. iv. 3), wrote an Epistle in Greek to the church at Corinth; alludes to words of Christ and to passages in the Epistles (Bishop of Rome, A.D., 91–100.)

3. *Ignatius*, Bishop of Antioch, A.D. 70–107. Some of his Epistles remain, but the text is corrupt.

4. *Polycarp*, disciple of John, Bishop of Smyrna, died A.D. 166. Only one of his Epistles remains, which contains many references to the New Testament. Dr. Lardner has collected forty allusions.

We will leave the question regarding apocryphal Gospels for a future number.

The answers to the June questions have occupied so much room that, instead of writing an article answering the July questions, on the *Inspiration of the New Testament*, we will send any one who is interested the tract by James Freeman Clarke which fully discusses this subject. N.B.—Any who desire will receive this tract, whether a member of the class or not. Address Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass.

QUESTIONS FOR SEPTEMBER.—THE GENUINENESS OF THE GOSPELS.

The general question is, "What are the best reasons for believing the accounts of the life of Jesus, contained in the four Gospels, to be authentic and genuine?"

1. Andrews Norton's reasons. See Norton's "Genuineness of the Gospels."

2. W. H. Furness's view. See almost any of Furness's books, especially "Unconscious Truth of the Four Gospels."

3. Prof. Huidekoper's view. See "In-

direct Testimony of History to the Genuineness of the Gospels."

4. Any book to which you have access which touches on this subject.

5. Your own view, if you have one.

Papers should be sent in by October 1 or soon after. A student may choose any one of the books mentioned or any other that she prefers, and write a brief summary of the argument. Or she may give her own argument: one or two pages will be enough to give the important points. We have mentioned these books, thinking that some readers would have access to one, some to another; but we do not limit our readers to any book nor to the view of any denomination. Let us have the best thought of all teachers, so far as we can obtain them.

Norton's book requires rather close study. It is old, but will always be valuable. Furness's may be easily read, and is sure to interest a reader. Huidekoper's gives the results of many years' careful study of the early Christian Church.

The subject will probably be continued two months.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

REQUESTS.

Miss A. C. Porter, 1 New Cushman Street, Portland, Me., asks for *any* magazines.

Mrs. D. Jayne, Cayuta, Schuyler Co., N.Y. The *Christian Register* and the *Household*.

Mrs. O. B. Butler, Farmington, Me. The *Cosmopolitan* or any other papers; will pass them on to other invalids.

Miss Ruie Peebles, Chester Hill, Ohio. The *Ladies' Home Journal*.

Miss Mamie Gunning, Cushing, Woodbury Co., Ia. "The Heir of Redclyffe" or any books. (Miss Gunning is an invalid, with spinal trouble.)

Mrs. Ida A. Junkins, York Corner, Me. The *Ladies' Home Journal*.

Mrs. May D. Jones, Nesbitt, Neb. Any good reading.

Miss Idonia Henning, Sulphur City, La. The *Pansy*.

Members of *The Cheerful Letter* Exchange who are able to send regularly any of the following papers or magazines after reading

them are requested to communicate with our secretary (address below):—

The *Christian Union*, the *Christian Register*, the *Unitarian*, the *Pansy*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Housewife*, *Housekeeper's Weekly*, *Harper's Monthly*, *Century*, *New England Magazine*, *Littell's Living Age*, *St. Nicholas*, *Harper's Young People*.

The *Christian Register* has been sent to Mrs. Jayne. The other requests are, so far as we know, unprovided for. Will those who have these papers or books to send write before sending to our secretary, Miss Bertha Langmaid, *Brookline, Mass.*, as otherwise one person may receive two copies, and another, none. (N.B.—Please notice the change in Miss Langmaid's address.)

Also, any one who is sending or intends to send a copy of *The Cheerful Letter* regularly to a correspondent is requested to notify Miss Langmaid.

Dear Friend,—I am pleased to acknowledge the receipt of *The Cheerful Letter* for July. Many thanks. I have read it with much pleasure, and, I trust, profit. Another stranger-friend sent me the June number. I would be glad to avail myself of your kind offer in that number to send a copy of "Stepping Heavenward." I have long desired to read it. I would also be glad to receive *Harper's Monthly*, or any good magazine, as proposed in the Book and Magazine Club. Reading is my sole recreation, but many times it is not available. God's blessing will surely rest on the good work you are doing. Mrs. L. M. Freeman, *Correctionville, Ia.*

Will pass on any reading matter sent.
(*"Stepping Heavenward"* has been sent.)

THE EDITOR'S LETTER-BOX.

FROM MONTANA.

Dear Miss C.,—I received *The Cheerful Letter* you so kindly sent me. I am so much interested in the dear little paper. It has done me a world of good already. I believe I was beginning to think that all people were growing selfish; but my eyes are opened. *The Cheerful Letter* will do good.

FROM VIRGINIA.

I read the little pamphlets this morning while I was churning, and was delighted

with them. It seemed to me that some portions of them were written expressly for me, particularly when Mr. Clarke speaks of labor being one of our greatest blessings, and God's discipline of toil and sorrow fitting us for a great career by and by. It is so sweet to think of God loving us *all* "with a universal, unwearied, untired affection." And also "Quiet from God," for I do try to have this very quiet for my own, and to have all my ways with him, believing that all his dispensations, both of sorrow and joy, are for my good.

Eternity alone will reveal the good you all do by bringing so much sunshine into the homes of those who are unable themselves to obtain good reading and yet crave it so earnestly. One of my sweetest friends in this country is a little woman whose husband is on the railroad, and she is left at home during the day with two little children, almost babies; but she is fortunate in being near her old home, and her father stays with her at night. I go to see her as often as I can, and always carry her a bundle of papers. She says she reads every word in them, not omitting the advertisements.

I know your Bible and history classes will be interesting, and would so like to join them, but am not able to take the paper, and, besides, we have no books to help us in the study of either. I try to teach my children all that I can; but the only help I have in teaching them the Bible is the exposition of the lessons which I find in old papers which are sent me sometimes. My youngest boy recited the whole of "The Westminster Shorter Catechism" perfectly before he was seven years old. They do not belong to any Sunday-school now, for the reason that we are so situated that they cannot get to church in time, living, as we do, away out in the country.

If you still have a copy of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and "Gentle Measures in Training the Young" I will be so glad if you will lend them to me. I would like to let my friend, of whom I wrote you, read them, too, if you do not object. I will try not to keep them over a month, and will try to pay return postage. I would ask for books oftener, but, as I am not able to pay the postage, I am afraid I might rob some poor "shut-in" or some one less favored even than myself by asking for the loan of the books and the

payment of postage on them, too. Please do not trouble yourself about the books if you haven't them now.

I was so much taken with the idea of the "Ten Minutes a Day Society" spoken of in the *Housewife*, and wished I could join it. I would take the time if I had anything to work on. I often think the greatest pleasure the possession of riches could give me would be the power to confer pleasure on others. When I think of my friends whom I have never seen, it makes me think how sweet it is to know that there is a Christian Brotherhood abroad in the world, which unites in a way those who have never seen each other.

(The following letter was written to Rev. Helen G. Putnam, and has been sent to us by a friend. Probably good reading matter would be acceptable in this neighborhood, even when the invalid is too weak and ill to enjoy it.)

ENFIELD, HALIFAX COUNTY, N.C., June 29, 1892.
REV. HELEN G. PUTNAM:

Dear Sir,—I received a little roll of pamphlets, papers, sermon-papers, some time ago, with your name signed thereon. I have read some of them, and, according to my understanding, they are very nice; but I will confess that my understanding is very weak, and I have suffered so much pain in my head and neck and back that I can't keep my reading together, and my mind is very weak, but I will extend my best and truest thanks to you for your kindness.

My age is 39 years, Oct. 21, 1892. I have been an invalid for 25 years, February 11 last. My under limbs are drawn up halfway. My back and shoulders are very stiff and some crooked. My neck is stiff. I cannot turn my head. I am very weak, with just enough strength to move around the house and yard a little at a time, and write a few letters to my friends. I have strength to do my own writing by resting myself very often. I am very poor in this world's goods, and have but little comfort and luxuries of life. I am deprived of almost every necessary of life. I am entirely dependent on others for a living. My father is dead. He died in 1863. My mother is 69 years old, and very much worn out with hard labor. There were three afflicted ones in the family. Two of them are dead. One was afflicted

19 or 20 years. All farmers have an awful rough time in this country, as land is extremely poor and will not produce well. Wheat will not make here, owing to poor land. Corn, two and one-half barrels to the acre, is doing well; and 500 to 600 pounds of seed cotton per acre. Peas, beans, and potatoes grow on a very small scale indeed. All farming produce is going down.

I live six miles west from Enfield, on a very poor little "one-mule" farm, with my mother. I am deprived of church and Sunday-school and all places of worship. I can't mingle in society as other young people do, and to be cut down so low and so hard and so long is almost more than I can bear, and with my good faith in God I don't feel like that I ought to lay the charges to him.

I don't know that I could be cured, but I have a right to say that I could be greatly helped if I had the money to buy the ingredients. I have several receipts that other people have tried, and say they are good for stiff joints and pains.

Some one sent me a few stamps and envelopes and paper. It was a small gift, but highly appreciated; and by doing so I am able to write to other friends.

Dear brother and friend, don't you feel able to aid me with a little mite? Dear brother, I do hope you will answer to this, and tell me a great deal about your country, yourself, and your churches. My people are most all members of the church, but I have never joined any church. Affliction is the cause.

(Mr.) B. C. KNIGHT.

FROM NEBRASKA.

Dear Miss C.,—I received your letter, the sermons, and *The Cheerful Letter*, for which I thank you kindly. I shall be glad to receive books to read, and should dearly like to take *The Cheerful Letter*, but am too poor to have any reading except what is kindly given to me.

I am the mother of six children, the oldest a boy in his fourteenth year, yet I am only thirty-three years old. We came to Nebraska, hoping to build us a home, and also for my husband's health. We have had a severe struggle to even live in the last three years. For two years we lost our crops by the drought, and this, the third season, we have been *hailed* out. I never saw such a storm. It laid a street a mile

wide all waste. It smashed our windows, and broke the door from our stove. I hardly know how we shall live, for we were depending on what we raised for our living. There is no work to be had, as all are poor people. Last year it was bad enough, but this is much worse. If it had not been for helps we received in the way of clothing, a good many would have suffered last year. There are not so many in need this year, but those who had their crops killed by the hail. We are the worst off, for we have so many to care for. There are nine of us.

I hardly know how to use my old stove; but I have tried to do my best, and be thankful that none of us were hurt. With all my troubles and worries, I try to look on the bright side; yet there are times when I almost despair.

I have a friend here who does not belong to any church, and I wish you would send *The Cheerful Letter* to her. She is a lovely woman, and loves the beautiful; yet she is, like myself, cut off from even the common things of life.

I want to bring up my boys to be good wise men and my daughter to be a good woman. How can I do this here in the wilds of Nebraska? I have used all the things I brought West with me till I am destitute for even such things as table-cloths and towelling. I think a clean neat home helps to make clean minds as well as reading pure and good books. I would like one of the copies of "Stepping Heavenward," if you still have one left. I want to read it, and will also let my sister and others read it. I should much like to get an atlas of recent date for my oldest boy. We do not have many months' school, only three last year; and he would like to learn all he can at home. He is well advanced for one who has had to battle with ill health and short-term schools.

Any reading will be acceptable. I will pass it on to others.

(The atlas and "Stepping Heavenward" have been promised. Perhaps some one would like to send other books. If so, the address will be given by the editor.)

FROM NEW YORK.

There is so much kindness in it (*The Cheerful Letter*). I did not think the world held so much goodness among those who

could help the less fortunate ones. Now I *know* it will interest you to know what I am doing. I think I did a little for Him who does so much for me. I have been in a place called —. There is only three families there. One is an old man who cannot walk, and his wife. They had plenty to eat and wear, not anything to read; and they love to read. I came home and selected a nice lot of reading, and took it to her. Now she says she "don't get lonely," and I am going to see she gets some oftener.

In the other family the woman was married before she was fourteen, and is not twenty; and has four children. Her husband drinks. She was alone when her last child was born. I was just a little way from her, "tenting," while my husband was building terraces around a cottage being built by a New York man, when her husband came for me. The rain was pouring in torrents. I went down; and I did wish God would call the little life home. I did what I could.

When the lady came to look at her house, I mustered up courage and told her. She gave me a nice lot of clothes for the baby, and went to see them, and gives the man steady work, as long as he keeps sober; and I wish you could see the change in them.

This week I take two little children to keep, free of charge. Then, if I can afford it, I will take two more. . . . I don't intend to buy anything to wear, but every cent I will save to feed the "Fresh Air" children.

I see you offer to send papers, but I have not sent my name for any. I have had so much done for me I would be ashamed to ask for reading. I don't take any paper or book,—for every dollar finds a place,—and even the pennies get away.

The minister wrote a letter to the president of the "King's Daughters" (Superintendent of the New York Tenement House Chapter), to say that the children intrusted to us would have the best of care. I wish I could do more. My health is not good. I have two books (bound) written by H. B. Stowe,—*"Dred,"*—as good, I think, as *"Uncle Tom's Cabin,"* I would send if you would like them. Oh, dear, I want to do something more. I would send my *Housewife*, but would like to keep the patterns.

(Would it not do as much good to keep the book (*"Dred"*) and lend it in your own

neighborhood? The postage on such a book would be ten cents on a volume (probably), enough to buy *two* good paper-covered books. For instance, you could probably get both "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and "Black Beauty," or "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and "Stepping Heavenward," for twenty cents. Not *always*, but by watching for opportunities good books may be bought very cheap. For this reason we usually advise keeping a large, heavy book in one place, for lending. Perhaps you could make that the beginning of a lending library, and we could send you other books to add to it.)

A paragraph on page 20 of *July Cheerful Letter*, on making scrap-books for invalids, invites me to make another suggestion. There are invalids and shut-ins who can use *only* their hands, who would be glad to find something which their hands could do. Perhaps these invalids might like to help other invalids by making these scrap-books, which could be circulated among the shut-ins. If so, I have a large number of *Christian Registers* which I should be glad to send to any one undertaking to make such scrap-books, together with material for the books themselves, if necessary. Address (Miss) E. M. Shumway, 168 West Chester Park, Boston, Mass.

The Cheerful Letter at hand, for which sincere thanks are tendered, as it is all I have to offer. Believe me, it will be a very welcome visitor in my home, as it is very seldom I can go to church. My lameness is worse at times. There are times when I can go out without much suffering, and then again I am really helpless. (Mrs.) Belle Blackey, Pelican Rapids, Otter Tail Co., Minn.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

Suppose a philosopher in disguise on a tour of observation from some distant planet. He finds himself in a spot not one hundred miles distant from Boston or Chicago. Among the objects which attract his attention are the children drawn along in their little chaises.

"Are these beautiful creatures of any value?" he asks of a bystander.

"Certainly: they are the hope of the

country. They will grow up into men and women who will take our places."

"I suppose there is no danger of their growing up any other than the right kind of men and women, such as your country needs?"

"On the contrary, there is every danger. Evil influences surround them from their birth. These beautiful creatures have in them the possibility of becoming base, corrupt, treacherous, deceitful, cruel, false, revengeful; of becoming, in fact, unworthy and repulsive in many ways. Why, all our criminals, our drunkards, liars, thieves, burglars, murderers, were once innocent little children like these!"

"And whether these will become like those or not depends on chance?"

"Oh, no! It depends largely on training, especially on early training. Children are like wax to receive impressions, like marble to retain them."

"Are they constituted pretty nearly alike, so that the treatment which is best for one is best for all?"

"By no means. Even those in the same family are often extremely unlike. They have different temperaments, dispositions, propensities. Some require urging, others checking. Some do better with praise, others without; the same of blame. In fact, a child's nature is a piece of delicate complex machinery, and each child requires a separate study; for, as the springs of action are concealed, the operator is liable at any time to touch the wrong one."

"And mistakes here will affect a child throughout its whole lifetime?"

"They will affect it to all eternity."

"But who among you dare make these early impressions which are to be so enduring? Who are the operators on these delicate and complex pieces of mental machinery?"

"Oh! the mothers always have the care of the children. This is their mission, the chief duty of their lives."

"But how judicious, how comprehensive, must be the course of education which will fit a person for such an office!"

"Do you think so? Well, it is not generally considered that a woman who is going to marry and settle down to family life needs much education."

"You mean, doubtless, that she only re-

ceives the special instruction which her vocation requires."

"Special instruction?"

"Yes. If woman's special vocation is the training of children, of course she is educated specially with a view to that vocation."

"Well, I never heard of such a kind of education. But here is one of our young mothers: she can tell you all about it."

We will suppose, now, that our philosopher is left with the young mother, who names over what she learned at the "Institute."

"And the training of children—moral, intellectual, and physical—was no doubt made a prominent subject of consideration?"

"Training of children? Oh, no! That would have been a curious kind of study."

"Where, then, were you prepared for the duties of your mission?"

"What mission do you mean?"

"Your mission of child-training."

"I had no preparation."

"No preparation! Have you, thus uninstructed, the power, the knowledge, the wisdom, requisite for guiding that mighty force, a child's soul?"

"Alas! there is hardly a day that I do not feel my own ignorance."

"Are there no sources from which knowledge may be obtained? There must be books written on these subjects."

"Possibly; but I have no time to read them."

"No time! No time to prepare for your chief mission?"

"It is our mission only in print. In real life it plays an extremely subordinate part."

"What, then, in real life is your mission?"

"Chiefly cooking and sewing."

"Your husband, then, does not share the common belief in regard to woman's chief duty?"

"Oh, yes, I have heard him express it many a time; though I don't think he comprehends what a woman needs, in order to do her duty by her children. But he loves them dearly. If one should die, he would be heart-broken."

"Is it a common thing here for children to die?"

"I am grieved to say that nearly one-fourth die in infancy."

"And those who live,—do they grow up in full health and vigor?"

"Oh, indeed they do not! Why, look at

our crowded hospitals! Look at the apothecaries' shops at almost every corner! Look at the advertisements of medicines! Don't you think there's meaning in these, and a meaning in the long rows of five-story swell-front houses occupied by physicians, and a meaning in the people themselves? There's scarcely one but has some ailment."

"But is this matter of health subject to no laws?"

"The phrase 'laws of health' is a familiar one, but I don't know what those laws are."

"Mothers, then, are not in the habit of teaching them to their children?"

"They are not themselves acquainted with them."—Mrs. A. M. Diaz, in "*Domestic Problems*."

MISCELLANEOUS.

We hope in October to have a meeting of delegates from all branches of *The Cheerful Letter* Exchange to organize more fully for winter work. We shall cordially welcome suggestions from all who are interested, and hope for letters from branches too distant to send delegates.

N.B.—The address of our secretary has been changed. It is now Miss Bertha Langmaid, No. 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

We were obliged to omit the History Class this month, as it has not been found practicable, during the summer, to find any one to take charge of it; but we hope that before another month this need will be supplied.

Members of the C. L. E. are reminded that this class is intended to include those who are remote from libraries and schools, and who would therefore be helped by books on this subject. It is suggested that books on American history may be offered in the Book Club by members of the C. L. E. who desire to contribute something useful.

Those who desire to become members of the C. L. E. may write to the secretary. (Address given above.)

Send letters and material for *The Cheerful Letter* to Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass. (After September 30, Miss Clarke's address will be Jamaica Plain, Mass.)

Subscriptions to the paper may be sent to Miss F. L. Close, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Fifty cents a year; five cents a single copy.